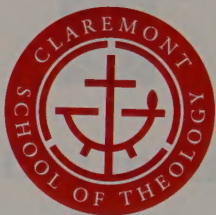


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REMARKS

School of Theology at Clermont

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DR. SOUTHEY'S

"VINDICIÆ ECCLESIAE ANGLICANÆ."

ADDRESSED

TO ALL LIBERAL-MINDED ENGLISH-MEN,
AND LOVERS OF TRUTH.

Rev. Wm. Rutter

"I am pained by the outrageous invectives that are thrown out against the Church of Rome. And I must further confess, that they appear to me, not only unjust, but even inhuman." Dr. PARE....In another work, (Life of Fox) the same benevolent and learned Dr. adds: "I hope to find a better way of shewing myself, either worthy to live, or fit to die, within the pale of the Church of England, than by insulting Roman Catholics with the opprobrious imputations of Superstition and Idolatry."

London:

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1854

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ERRATA.

Page 17, line 3, *dele* *as*.

.....24,15, *for* many *read* all.

.....26,19, *after* bringing down *add* the continuation of miracles to,

.....36, 3, Note, *dele* and...line 5, *for* laboured *read* abound

...line 13, *for* lectu *read* lectionis...line 15, *for* publicum *read* publicam...line 17, *for* splendore *read* splendore.

PREFACE.



A DEGREE of enthusiasm is generally considered requisite to constitute the character of a Poet; and that Dr. Southey is a Poet but few will deny. As a writer, in prose as well as in verse, he may also be allowed to have considerable merit, however we may condemn his narrow and illiberal principles as a Politician or Theologian. His works are numerous and miscellaneous; and, Proteus-like, he can change his style and sentiments, agreeably to the subject he has in hand. In Don Espriella's Letters, he writes like a Catholic,---in Wat Tyler's Drama, like a Radical,---in the Life of Mr. Westley, like a Methodist,---and, in his "Book of the Church," like an intolerant high Churchman of the present

Establishment. The object of this last work, as well as his "*Vindiciæ*," is "to expose the principles and practices of the Catholic Church,---to shew that the present advocates of that Church are not to be trusted,---that they pervert history, and represent their tenets, not as these tenets are, but as they wish them to be thought in this country *."

It was to repel these opprobrious imputations, that Mr. Butler undertook the "*Vindication of the Catholic Church*;" and I believe that every impartial reader will consider it an able refutation of the calumnies heaped upon that Church by the Poet Laureate.---With the same view Dr. Milner had previously published his "*Strictures on the Book of the Church*;" which seem to have galled Dr. Southey in no ordinary degree, if we may judge from the abusive terms which he applies to that distinguished Prelate. He calls him "an ill-mannered man," --- "a faithless writer," and says that his *Strictures* are "a thoroughly malignant and scurrilous Publication." Perhaps the impartial reader will consider the Publication of Dr. Southey, as equally or more deserving of such harsh epithets; especially when he is informed that the most offensive passage in Dr. Milner's *Strictures*, occurs in a note at p. 21, and that the following circum-

* p. iv.

stance gave occasion to it. The Poet Laureate, in his "Book of the Church," mentions, that in one year, when more than six hundred pounds were offered at the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury, nothing was presented at that of our Saviour; apparently insinuating that the Catholics had transferred their worship of Christ to the Martyr Becket. To repel this injurious insinuation, (for such it appeared to Dr. Milner) he replies in the following words: "With equal justice, might a Catholic argue, that the Protestants of London prefer poor Byrne to Christ, because they have lately subscribed a large sum for this victim of the infamous Bishop Jocelyn's perjury, and not a shilling to Christ-Church Hospital, in their city." This is the sentence which appears so particularly shocking to Dr. Southey, and which calls forth the most painful emotions of sorrow and shame, &c. To judge from the Poet's angry feelings against Dr. Milner, in this instance, he seems but little disposed to practise himself, what he recommends to others, that is, "to bear with the plainness of an honest, straight forward style, which expresses all that it means." For such is certainly the character of the "Strictures," and of all Dr. Milner's writings.---But this learned man is now no more; he has paid the debt of nature, but will still live in his valuable writings; and that he should have been maligned by Mr. Southey, is

not to be wondered at, since he also attempts to fix the black and abominable character of cheats and impostors upon other men, of the most excellent and exemplary virtue, whose sanctity no sober Protestant ever before called in question.

In his *Vindiciæ*, Dr. Southey renews his former accusations against the Roman Catholic Church; but he takes a wider range for the purpose of proving, from the testimony of Catholic writers, the truth of those charges of idolatry, imposture, and wickedness*, which he had first advanced in his "Book of the Church." To enable the impartial reader to judge of the validity of his proofs, is the object of the following remarks, which, it was thought might not be unacceptable to the Public, till Mr. Butler is pleased to favour us with a more complete and satisfactory answer to the Poet Laureate's *Vindiciæ*.

* p. 525.

A FEW

REMARKS ON DR. SOUTHEY'S

"VINDICIÆ ECCLESIE ANGLICANÆ."

1. *Dr. Southey the Aggressor.*

DR. SOUTHEY, though clearly the aggressor in this Controversy, tells us, that it was not his intention to have answered any animadversions which his Book of the Church might draw forth from the Catholic Party; but he has been induced by his friends to alter his resolution; and now, in a work of above five hundred pages, attempts to prove that the far greater part of Christian Europe are and have been, for many ages, guilty of "idolatry, superstition, and imposture."—In the conclusion of his work, he affects to dislike that sort of criticism, which tends either to wound the feelings of an author, or to depreciate

him in the opinion of the Public, while he cannot but know that, by his insinuations and misrepresentations, he is wounding the feelings of millions, and that the very object of his work is to depreciate them in the opinion of their countrymen, and to deprive them of the birth-right of Englishmen.

2. *Catholic Emancipation.*

BUT Dr. Southey would have us to believe, that "there is something in the times," which has made a deep impression on his mind : something of so appalling a nature, as even to call forth "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn." The reader will perhaps be a little surprised, when he finds, that this something is nothing more than the question of Catholic Emancipation ; that is, whether Catholics, after being recognized by the Legislature as *good subjects*, ought still to remain in a degraded state, and liable to civil incapacities, merely on account of their religious tenets ;—a question which has been repeatedly decided in their favour by the greatest and most enlightened statesmen of modern times ; such as Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, Mr. Windham, Mr. Burke, Mr. Sheridan, &c. &c. — The English and Irish Catholics have certainly reason to deplore the loss of these great men, whose abilities as statesmen are perhaps unrivalled in the annals of mankind. It were perhaps an idle waste of words, to endeavour to prove what the whole nation will

readily acknowledge, that their talents were far superior to those of the opposite and intolerant party. Entirely opposite to each other in their characters, habits, dispositions, and manners, still in one respect, the above-mentioned statesmen were perfectly agreed, and that was on the subject of *Catholic Emancipation*, which they uniformly considered as a measure “conducive to the strength, unanimity, and prosperity of the Empire *.”

Now, I appeal to my countrymen, and I do it nearly in the words of the amiable Bishop of Norwich, whether the judgment of such enlightened and practical Statesmen as Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, &c. does not carry far more weight with it, upon a question like this, than the judgment of Dr. Southey, or even of both the Universities, and of all the Divines that have sat in Convocation, from the Reformation to the present time? If it were necessary to confirm the judgment of such enlightened Statesmen, I might add the testimony of some of the most learned, respectable, and independent Clergymen, and even Dignitaries of the Established Church, who, rising superior to vulgar prejudices, have triumphantly supported the expediency, the policy, and the justice of the Catholic Claims.—“Claims,” says the liberal Bishop of Nor-

* See Mr. Pitt’s Speech in the House of Commons. Let me ask Dr. Southey, whether these great Statesmen are to be considered as enemies to Monarchy and Christianity, or as desirous of subverting the Established Church, and re-establishing “a system of superstition, idolatry, and persecution?”

wich, "which, if granted, would, I conceive, give additional energy to the State, and to the *Established Church additional safety and duration*;—Claims, which in many other countries, I might say in most countries, would be readily admitted, without any of that narrow bigotry, that unreasonable mistrust and jealousy, which they excited in this country."—The late Dr. Watson, formerly Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, and who, in point of learning and erudition, was inferior to none on the Episcopal Bench, was no less favourable to the Catholic Question, and, after mature consideration, expresses his sentiments in the following terms: "I have thought it a duty to declare publicly my approbation of a measure, calculated, I sincerely believe, above all other measures, to support the independence of the country, to promote peace among fellow-subjects, and charity among fellow-Christians, and in no probable degree dangerous to the Constitution, either in Church or State." Surely, then, all liberal-minded Christians of the British Empire will condemn Dr. Southey's intolerant zeal, in representing the Catholic Question (which has for its advocates so many able statesmen) as "the most *insidious*, the most *mischievous*, the most *perilous*, that has ever been brought forward since the Long Parliament*."—Surely the judgment of so many enlightened politicians, alone ought to make Dr. Southey and those persons hesitate, who,

* Page 523.

under the influence of party zeal, are eagerly and systematically pursuing a system of exclusion and intolerance, with evident danger of bringing upon Ireland, sooner or later, the horrors of a civil and religious war.

I trust, therefore, that the political machinations of the present "*No Popery Faction*," though assisted by the enthusiasm of the Poet Laureate, will prove unsuccessful, and that, on the contrary, they will excite the indignation of every liberal and enlightened bosom, as debasing the public mind,—as degrading the nation in the eyes of Europe,—as exciting a spirit of bigotry,—and as inflaming religious dissensions in this and the Sister Kingdom. As to the vulgar cry of "The Church in danger," which certain interested Placemen and some of the intolerant Clergy are ever ready to excite, with a view to their own preferment, it deserves not the least attention; and I would ask all such as are alarmed at the mention of Catholic Emancipation, whether they do not pay their religion a very bad compliment, by the expression of such fears?

3. *The Allegiance of Catholics.*

BUT it is objected to Catholics, that their allegiance is divided. This is a false accusation. For what is allegiance, but the duty which subjects owe to the Government? Now, although Catholics, like other subjects, whether of the Kirk of Scotland, or of any other body of Dis-

senters, do not recognize a *Spiritual Jurisdiction* in the Crown, their dissent in this matter is sanctioned by the law itself, and therefore their allegiance is not divided.—I allow, indeed, that in *Spiritual Concerns* Catholics profess Obedience to the Pope, but without any prejudice to the Allegiance which they owe to the King; for allegiance relates not to *spiritual*, but to *civil* duties. The Civil Power of the State, and the Spiritual Authority of the Church, are perfectly distinct, and were never intended, by their Divine Author, to interfere or clash with each other. For a more full vindication of the Allegiance of Catholics, the reader is referred to Dr. Doyle's *Essay on the Catholic Claims*, and to the *Declaration of Faith* recently published by the Catholic Bishops in Great Britain and Ireland.

4. *The Creed of Pope Pius IV.*

Mr. BUTLER, in his Introduction, very properly inserted the Creed of Pope Pius, as an authentic exposition of the faith of the Roman Catholic Church. Had Dr. Southey proved any part of that Creed to be false and repugnant to the Holy Scripture, he would have done far more towards justifying the Protestant Reformation, than by raking in all the old kennels of slander for filth to asperse the most holy personages of the Catholic Church.

Dr. Southey objects against this Creed, that the Pope has added thirteen articles as necessary to

salvation, not one of which, he pretends, was thought so by the apostles; as if Dr. Southey knew better what the apostles thought, than the great body of Pastors, the successors of the apostles.—It may be proper also to remind him, that for 24 articles in *our* creed, he has 39 in *his own*, and that, some years ago, the Established Clergy in vain petitioned to be freed from the subscription to them, to the number of about three hundred. As to the articles in *our* creed, contested by Protestants, they have, again and again, been proved both from Scripture and the unanimous consent of the Fathers, to have been always held in the Catholic Church as points of that faith which was *once delivered to the saints**.—Dr. Southey politely asks, whether the Roman Catholics, in assenting to these articles, “do know to what they have assented?” Now, it may surely be allowed to Catholics to know what are the real tenets of their own religion, although, I believe, very few Protestants know them, because they seldom take the trouble to examine what they are, but take them as misrepresented by their professed enemies†. According to Dr. Southey, “our Creed comprehends an acknow-

* See Pope Pius’ profession of faith vindicated from novelty, by Mr. Gother, and Dr. Challoner. See also “The Faith of Catholics, confirmed by Scripture and attested by the Fathers of the five first centuries.”

† “Your Legislators,” said Mr Burke to the Catholic Deputation, “know nothing at all about the Catholic Religion, and this is the great misfortune of your cause.”

ledgment of the temporal authority of the Popes, of their power to depose kings, and to absolve subjects from their allegiance. It includes an assent to the propositions, that heretics are to be persecuted, that faith is not to be kept with them; that simulation is lawful, and that the guilt of homicide is not incurred by killing excommunicated persons, if zeal for religion be the motive." p. 30. But this we disavow as a shameful and calumnious representation of Catholics and their religious principles, and we trust that every person of candour and good sense will give more credit to the public attestations and solemn oaths of the most respectable Roman Catholics of the nation who have repeatedly abjured and condemned such abominable tenets*, than to the unwarranted assertions of their enemy Dr. Southey. We Catholics have sworn to be faithful and to bear true allegiance to the king; we have sworn to defend him to the utmost of our power against all conspiracies or attempts whatever against his person, crown and dignity,—to maintain, support, and defend the succession of the crown to his Majesty's family, &c.: is it then just, is it candid in Dr. Southey to "suggest, that the British Roman Catholics are acting contrary to their religion, and would do well to apply to the Court of Rome rather than to the British Par-

* See Dr. Doyle, on the inviolability of oaths and engagements made or entered into by Catholics.

liament for relief, when he knows that our lives and conduct bear testimony to the sincerity of our declarations and loyalty, as that the Legislature has sanctioned our Oath of Allegiance, and that, on the faith of this Oath, bills have been passed for our relief *.—In the debate on the Catholic Question in 1810, did not the Earl of Liverpool declare, “that the explanations which had been given respecting the Catholic Doctrines and Allegiance were *completely satisfactory*?”

5. *Diffusion of the Roman Catholic Religion.*

Mr. BUTLER alledges the general diffusion of the Roman Catholic Religion over the habitable globe, as affording an argument in its favour; and not without reason, for the Scripture, in many places, assures us, that the Church, or Kingdom of Christ, should be spread throughout the world. Ps. 2. v. 8.

* The language of the learned Dr. Horsley was very different from that of Dr. Southey and the “No Popery faction.” “I do not hold, that the Roman Catholic Religion is one which enjoins disloyalty:—I do not hold the maxim, that, from their scruples about the Oath of Supremacy, they are a disloyal people:—I do not hold, that they maintain any such belief, as that the Pope may depose Protestant Princes, or absolve Catholic subjects from allegiance to them; or that no faith is to be kept with heretics, or persons of a different religious persuasion from themselves.” Dr. Horsley’s Speech, 10 May, 1805.

“Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Malachi c. 1. v. 11. From the rising of the sun, even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to my name, and a pure offering.” Hence in the New Testament we find, that Christ’s commission, given to the apostles and their successors, comprehends both *all ages* and *all nations*. St. Mat. c. 28. v. 18, 19, 20. *All power is given to me in heaven and earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations—and lo I am with you all days, even to the end of the world.*

Hence the Church is called *Catholic* or *Universal**, because she is the Church of *all ages*, and, more or less, of *all nations*. This mark of the Church is much insisted upon by St.

* Is it decorous in Dr. Southey to speak of a Religion, professed by the major part of the Christian world, as “a prodigious structure of imposture and wickedness?” p. 54. What could Dr. Southey have said more scurrilous and malicious?—But may not this calumnious imputation be retorted with more truth against any diminutive sect of the Protestant Religion? Let Dr. Southey remember, that the ninth reason assigned by Mr. Chillingworth for abandoning the Protestant Religion, was “because the Protestant cause is *now*, and hath been *from the beginning*, maintained with gross falsifications and calumnies; whereof their prime controversy writers are notoriously and in high degree guilty.”

Austin in many places, and urged against the Donatists as a demonstration, that theirs could not be the true Church, because of the narrow limits of their communion. How much more would he have urged it against Dr. Southey's Church, which, for a thousand years and more, was no where to be found upon earth, and even now is far from being, in any tolerable sense, *Catholic* or *Universal*, being only established in one corner of Europe.

In vain Dr. Southey objects, that the Mahometans and Pagans are far more numerous than the Catholics, for as they form not one body, but are divided into a great variety of hostile sects, they have nothing of that unity which subsists among all the members of the Catholic Church.—And to what purpose does Dr. Southey present us with a view of the Protestant jarring sects, since they are only of yesterday, and have no communion with one another; whereas the Church of Christ, being *One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolical*, can be only that which is in communion with the Church of Rome.

6. *First Introduction of Christianity.*

ALTHOUGH the documents are scanty respecting the introduction of Christianity among the Britons, yet Dr. Southey will hardly deny, that the Britons as well as Saxons were converted by Missionaries sent from Rome :

the former by St. Fugatius and Damianus, sent into Britain by Pope Eleutherius *; and the latter by St. Austin and his companions, commissioned and sent thither by Pope Gregory. So that, unless Dr. Southey can clearly prove, that Rome changed its faith in the interval of time between the conversion of the Britons and that of the Saxons, it is fair to conclude, that the *same faith* was preached to the Saxons as had been preached before to the Britons.

Again, as it is impossible to prove by authentic documents, that any change has taken place in the *public faith* of the English Church from its conversion under the Saxon Kings, till the Protestant Reformation, (during all which time, our forefathers are represented by several Protestant writers to have been all Papists,) hence two undeniable consequences will follow, namely;—first, that the Faith, now professed by Roman Catholics, was the faith of the Second Century, that is,

* This is attested by the Old Llandaff Register, (*Anglia Sacra*, v. 2. p. 667), by Nennius in the 6th Century, and by an ancient Catalogue of the Popes, made in the reign of the Emperor Justinian, that is, between the years 527 and 565. Let the following testimony suffice, transcribed from Venerable Bede, (Book 1. c. 4) “Lucius, King of Britain, sent a letter to Eleutherius, desiring to be made a Christian by his command,” anno 156.—What could induce Dr. Southey to doubt of these authorities, admitted by Parker, Godwin, and Usher, but his unwillingness to ascribe so great a benefit as the conversion of the Britons, to the See of Rome?

the *ancient* and *primitive faith*: and secondly, that the doctrine of the Reformed Churches is an innovation of that faith in all dogmatical points, wherein it differs from the Church of Rome.—See Manning's "England's Conversion and Reformation compared."

In page 62, Dr. Southey tells us, that, "beyond all doubt, the fundamental principles of Christian Morality have been inculcated by all Christian Ministers in all ages:" but how will he reconcile this with "that system of fraud, of falsehood, and impositions, which he asserts has been regularly carried on by the Romish Clergy, and sanctioned by the Popes?" p. 101.

The learned Grotius takes notice, that forgeries cannot be charged upon the Popes, who by the most severe canons forbid them, punish the authors if detected, and give all possible encouragement to judicious critics. T. 3. Op. Theol. L. 1. de Anti-christo.—But how different is the character which Mr. Whitaker gives of Protestant writers, in his *Vindication of Mary*! "I blush," says he, "for the honour of Protestantism. Forgery seems to have been peculiar to the Reformed. . . . I look in vain for one of those accursed outrages of imposition among the disciples of Popery." vol. iii. p. 3. "Forgery appears to have been the peculiar disease of Protestantism." ib. p. 54. —Dr. Southey often quotes from Fox's Book, entitled, "Acts and Monuments of the Church," which the Catholics, on its first appearance, called a *dunghill of lies*: nor have ingenious and learned Protestants enter-

tained a much better opinion of it. Mr. Collier, a person well versed in the history of those times, shews that Fox was a careless writer, who gathered his accounts from people of weak minds, and not worthy to be trusted. The learned Richard Rawlinson, in his "New Method of studying History," says of this work, that "The turn the author was biassed by, is evident in the whole work, and has given good reason to suspect his honesty, as well as his capacity. In troublesome and noisy times, the author's reputation began to rise so high, as to procure his work a post in the parochial churches almost equal to that of the Holy Scriptures. But when some of his martyrs appeared alive to confront their register, the book was suppressed, new modelled, and came out in a larger, though somewhat more modest dress, with a thinner red-lettered calendar." T. 2. p. 48. Nay, Fox honoured with the title of martyrs some who were hanged for robbery, and one who hanged himself in prison; a fact, of which Sir Thomas More positively declared himself to be convinced, after having frequently and fully examined into it. To complete the character of Dr. Southey's favourite author and his work, I refer him to the account which our indefatigable historian and antiquary, Mr. Hearn, has given of both.

7. *The Anglo-Saxons.*

WHAT faith the Anglo-Saxons received from Rome, we learn from Venerable Bede. Dr. Southey here takes occasion to supply an omission in his "Book of the Church," by giving us a pretty full "account of this most extraordinary man, who was the light and wonder of his age." p. 63. From Bede's relation, then, (which is such as to approve his own perfect veracity) we learn how our Anglo-Saxons were converted by St. Austin and his fellow-missionaries, sent by the Bishop of Rome. "They came," says our Venerable Historian, "not with diabolical, but divine virtue; carrying for their banner a silver cross, and the *image* of the Lord our Saviour painted on a board; and singing litanies, made humble prayer for their own, and for the eternal salvation of them, for whom and to whom they were come." At first they assembled in an ancient church, built by the Britons in the time of the Romans. "Then they met to *sing, pray, say mass, to preach and baptize;*" strenuously labouring to enforce their instructions by the spiritual arms of the gospel, watching, fasting, and prayer*." — The difference between the *primitive*

* It does no credit to modern historians, to omit, with such apparent dread, the two plain and important words of Bede, *Missus facere*, to *say Masses*; Collier translates them, *solemn offices of religion*, p. 67; Carte, p. 222, *other acts of devotion*; while they are totally suppressed by Fuller, Warner, and the rest.

faith of England, and the late *innovations* of Protestants, may be easily gathered from Bede's Church-history, compiled above a thousand years ago.

3. *Miracles.*

ROMAN CATHOLICS assert with great confidence, that there has been a constant succession of miracles in their Church, and that they consequently, as the seal of heaven, sanction the truth of her doctrines. Dr. Southey, on the contrary, rejects all Roman Catholic miracles as mere cheats and juggles, and undertakes to prove, that "the Papal System is a prodigious system of imposture and wickedness." p. 97.

I presume that Dr. Southey, with many other Christians, whether Protestants or Catholics, will allow, that miracles are not absolutely *incredible*, and that they also afford one of the strongest proofs of the truth and divinity of the Christian Religion. I presume also, that Dr. Southey is fully aware, that, on this very account, the most celebrated champions of infidelity have made use of every argument that ingenuity could devise against the possibility, the existence, and the proof of miracles.—That Dr. Southey, however, and many of his communion, besides professed Deists, should betray a sort of antipathy against miracles, without examining whether they are true or false, is matter of regret. Nay, they seem to agree, that, in the case of any other miracles besides those which are recorded in

Scripture, no evidence can be sufficient to establish their credibility. Thus it appears, that Protestants, in general, have now adopted the system of the late Dr. Middleton, in denying the reality of all miracles, after the days of the Apostles : but they would do well, first to consider the nature and force of *moral* evidence, and then to weigh some of the strong arguments, by which several learned men of their own communion have proved the continuance of miracles after the apostolic age ; and that the Doctor's system manifestly tends to open a door to universal scepticism, and consequently to undermine the very foundation of the Christian Religion.

I am aware, that Protestants consider the Bible as the sole and complete ground of their religion : but since they receive this book as divinely inspired, upon the testimony of the primitive Fathers and their successors, the consequence will be, that, if these are a set of crafty knaves or credulous fools, (as must be the case in the Doctor's system) nothing candid or impartial can be expected from them ; and therefore we cannot depend on their word, nor be certain that the Bible itself is from God, since it comes to us through such an unsafe channel.

Let us then see, in what manner many learned Protestants have argued the case with Dr. Middleton respecting miracles, and we shall find, that the same arguments, by which they have proved the continuance of miracles after the apostolic age, will prove also, against Dr. Southey and modern

Protestants, the continuance of them to the present time.

The substance of what they have said respecting the continuation of miracles, may be reduced to the following points :—1°. That the things affirmed to be done, are *possible* to be done.—2°. That there are witnesses who affirm that these things were actually done.—3°. That these witnesses are competent judges of the facts they relate, so as not to be deceived themselves, nor willing to deceive others.

As to the *possibility* of miracles, it is admitted, both by Catholics and Protestants ; and indeed, the nature of the miracles in question is so agreeable to those mentioned in the gospel, that whoever believes the one, cannot, as to the *nature* of them, doubt the *possibility* of the other ; and as they are both affirmed to be wrought by an extraordinary divine power, *that* puts their possibility out of all manner of question.

Both Protestants and Catholics are equally agreed, that the following authors do assert the continuance of miraculous powers in the three first centuries, viz. Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Minutius Felix, Origen, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Lactantius : the several quotations from these eight primitive writers, are positive testimonies of the facts in dispute, and may be seen either in Dr. Middleton's Book, or that of Bishop Walton.

Now, as to the credibility of facts, "it lies open," says Middleton himself, "to the trial of our senses : plain facts cannot delude us, cannot

speak any other language, or give any other information, but what flows from nature and truth. The testimony of facts, therefore, as it is offered to our senses, may be called, as it were, the testimony of God himself, which, in the ordinary course of his providence, he has thought fit to appoint for the guidance of human life." Consequently these Fathers, in asserting the existence of such miraculous facts as their senses could not delude them in, and of which they were eye-witnesses, could not be deceived themselves; and from the known character of their veracity and honesty, we are assured that they would not deceive us: to which we may add, that several of them were converted from Heathenism to Christianity, and afterwards became martyrs for their religion—"a certain proof of their sincerity," as Mr. Addison observes, in speaking of their testimony for the continuance of miracles.

"At the same time," continues Mr. Addison, "that these learned men declare, how disingenuous, base, and wicked it would be; how much beneath the dignity of philosophy, and contrary to the principles of Christianity, to utter falsehoods or forgeries in the support of a cause, though ever so just in itself; they confidently assert, that this miraculous power subsisted in the Church; nay, tell us, that they themselves had been eye-witnesses of it, at several times, and in several instances; nay, they appeal to the heathens themselves, for the truth of several facts which they relate; nay, challenge them to be present at their assemblies, and satisfy themselves, if they doubted of it; nay, we

find that *pagan* authors have in some instances confessed this miraculous power." So far Mr. Addison, in his "Evidences of the Christian Religion," section 7.

Dr. South, whom Dr. Southey recommends as a "most powerful and excellent writer," asserts also the continuance of miracles: "The exact period of their duration," says he, "can hardly be assigned; but *manifest it is from all history*, that they continued long after the Apostles' time; as we may gather from the several ages of those eminent Fathers and Christian Writers, who have so freely given in their testimony respecting the ejection of evil spirits from persons possessed, as very common in their time, in the Christian Church; a power, no doubt, *supernatural*, and therefore *miraculous*: such were Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Lactantius*." But after bringing down the three first centuries, we are not to stop short there, as most Protestants do. If we consider the fourth age, we shall find, that it abounded more with celebrated writers, than the three preceding, and therefore, in their valuable works, which are still extant, we see more ample and circumstantial accounts of the same miraculous powers being frequently exerted, during that period of time. In fact, nothing seems

* See his "Sermon preached at Westminster," p. 468, 2d ed.—Dr. Waterland, Chapman, Dodwell, Brooks, and others of the Protestant persuasion, have also asserted the continuation of miracles against the Middletonian system, and have invincibly proved its dangerous tendency.

to be wanting in their accounts, which can be necessary to satisfy the most scrupulous inquirer. The very names of the witnesses command respect and credit : our vouchers are St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Chrysostome, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Austin, and many others of great note: on their authority we depend. They were oftentimes eye-witnesses of the facts they relate, and were possessed of every qualification necessary to render their evidence decisive. If we may believe Dr. Middleton himself, “ they were equally pious, less credulous, and more judicious than any who had gone before them*.” These illustrious men are the witnesses whom we produce ; and if the same credit may be given to them, as is due to the attestation of every man of sense and probity, the evidence for the continuance of miracles is conclusive †.—Dr. Middleton, also, allows that there “ is as much reason to believe these miraculous powers were continued even to the latest ages, as to any other, how early and primitive soever, after the days of the Apostles †.” “ And therefore,” says he, “ by granting them [the Catholics] but a single age of miracles, after the times of the Apostles, we shall be entangled in a series of difficulties,

* Introd. p. 85.

† See in Bishop Walton an abstract of their testimonies, with a refutation of Dr. Middleton’s exceptions; to which is added, a clear deduction of facts in every age, to prove that the miraculous powers have continued to be exerted in the Catholic Church down to the present time.

‡ Free Inquiry, Pref. p. 14.

whence we can never fairly extricate ourselves, till we allow the same powers to the present age*.” The Dr. was sensible of the insuperable force which the claim of miracles gives to the Catholic cause, and of the weakness of every thing alledged by Protestants against that claim. Hence he concluded, that the only expedient for securing the Protestant Religion, was to strike a bold stroke, and deny *all* miracles since the days of the Apostles. As miracles, then, are one of the striking arguments in favour of the Catholic Religion, we are not to be surprised at the absurd prejudices of Protestants against all miraculous events. These they deny, however well attested, lest, in admitting them, they should be obliged to acknowledge a religion which condemns the Reformation †.

* Introd. p. 82.

† In vain does Dr. Southey repeatedly affirm, that it *was* and *is still* the system of the Roman Catholic Church, “to encourage, to accredit, and to practise pious frauds,” p. 107. In vain does he, among other instances, refer to Joseph Labrè, a poor man, who died at Rome the 16th of April, 1783; I am convinced that the Dr. never examined into the miracles that were wrought at that time by his intercession. Soon after his death, these miracles were subjected to a most rigorous examination, and this was continued for a considerable time, but without coming to any solemn decision concerning any one of them, although no doubt could remain of the divine interposition.—Can we desire a more striking proof of the truth of them, than the conversion of a Protestant Minister, with whom I was personally acquainted. I allude to the Rev. John Thayer, a native of Boston, who happened to be at

The misfortune is, that our separated Brethren begin to examine the subject of miracles at the wrong end ; that is, they first lay it down as an undoubted principle, that the Church of Rome is a superstitious, idolatrous Church, and hence conclude, that whatever miracles are said to be wrought in the Church of Rome, cannot be true miracles, but must necessarily be cheats and forgeries. Thus they make the doctrines the test, whereby to judge of the truth of the miracles ; instead of making miracles the test, whereby to judge of the truth of the doctrines. But let them consult their Bible, and they will find that the power of working miracles, was given to Moses, to the prophets, and to the apostles, in order to

Rome, and who has since published a particular account of the motives of his conversion. He tells us, that of all his prejudices against Catholics, a formal disbelief of their claim to miracles was most deeply rooted in his mind. Not content with denying the miracles, which were published at the time, he made them the subject of his raillery, and in the coffee-houses passed some unbecoming jests on the servant of God, on account of his extreme poverty, and neglect of cleanliness. However, as the number and weight of the evidences daily increased, he thought it his duty carefully to examine the matter himself, and, after the strictest scrutiny, was as fully convinced of the miraculous cures, as of any other historical facts ; and this conviction, added to the forcible arguments which prove the Catholic Faith, induced him to lay aside the prejudices of his education, and finally to abjure those erroneous doctrines of Protestantism, which he had hitherto preached as the Word of God.

convince mankind of the truth of their doctrine, and that they were commissioned by God to teach it. Hence our Saviour also appealed to his miracles for the truth of his doctrine, and of his being the promised Messiah. *John c. v. v. 36.* We may indeed consider it, therefore, as the effect of a wise and over-ruling Providence in favour of the Catholic Church, that, in the case of certain miraculous historical facts, the Protestant as well as the Deist, is inevitably reduced to the alternative, either of denying the fact itself, or of admitting that the Catholic Religion is from God. If, on the one hand, the Protestant boldly denies the fact, then he unsettles the whole *rationale* of historical evidence, and brings himself (if he would preserve the character of consistency) into a state of universal scepticism as to all past occurrences; if, on the other hand, he admits the fact, then he will find himself compelled to admit along with it, the necessary concomitant fact of a divine sanction to the Catholic Church. So that, under this aspect of the question, the point will be, whether a man evinces a higher degree of credulity, by persuading himself, that a recorded fact is absolutely false, notwithstanding it rests upon the very best historical evidence; or by believing the fact, and thence admitting, as its necessary consequence, a divine sanction of the Catholic Church*.—One of the

* I here adopt nearly Mr. Faber's words. What he says against the Deists, to establish the credibility of certain miraculous historical facts, is no less applicable to Protestants;

motives assigned by Mr. Chillingworth, for abandoning the Protestant Religion, was, "because, if any credit may be given to as creditable records as any that are extant, the doctrine of Catholics has been frequently confirmed, and the opposite doctrine of Protestants, confounded with supernatural and divine miracles." In vain Protestants pretend, that no accounts of miracles can be true; in vain do they alledge that deceit and falsehood are very *common*, and miracles very extraordinary; and that therefore, the whole question is decided, and there can be no reason for any further examination †. "A person who should reason in this man-

"It is hard to conceive," says he, "why competent evidence should not be sufficient to *establish any fact which does not involve a contradiction in terms*. No doubt, the more extraordinary the fact, the stronger is the evidence which we require; but to assert, in the abstract, that no testimony can establish a miracle (which is the case of many Protestants) more nearly resembles a paradox, thrown out for the purpose of exciting astonishment, than a sober and cautious position, laid down from a real love of truth." p. 221. We may venture to say, therefore, that the testimony in favour of *Catholic* as well as of Scriptural miracles, is so strong and so varied, that it is a *less* exertion of faith to admit the occurrence of these miraculous facts, than to maintain the falsehood of the witnesses.

† The validity of this sort of reasoning, will be readily estimated by a familiar application of its principle. Various Bank-notes, equally and respectively claim to be genuine. But it is positively ascertained, that many of them are forgeries: therefore, by every rule of logic, *all* of them must inevitably be forgeries likewise.—No doubt *many* false miracles

ner," says Dr. Price, "in other instances would be quite ridiculous. Testimony is an evidence which admits of an infinite variety of degrees, and which sometimes is scarcely short of demonstration. Though it often deceives, yet there are some kinds of it that have never deceived, and that cannot deceive. It is one of the principal sources of all our information and knowledge. To argue, therefore, against the existence of miracles, from the general topic of the commonness of false testimony, is trifling and unjust. Historical evidence being of all degrees, what is true of other historical evidence, ought to be admitted in the case of miracles."---"Accordingly it is not conceivable," he adds, "that any person, after an attentive perusal of the writings of the Holy Fathers, can be able easily to persuade himself, that those holy person-

are to be found in the legends of Catholic Saints, therefore *all* are false, however well attested by such respectable, honest, and learned witnesses, as St. Athanasius, St. Austin, St. Jerome, St. Bernard, &c. &c. Is it credible, that men of this description, who have been willing to undergo any sufferings, rather than be guilty of falsehoods, would pretend to have seen what they never saw, boldly assert facts, of which they had no knowledge, and go about telling lies in order to teach virtue?—Is it credible, that such men, had they been convinced of the Catholic Church's abounding in lying wonders, would join with her in endeavouring to obtrude upon the world a history of lies? These things are incredible.—Moreover, the ascription of miraculous powers to the Church, would inevitably, unless these powers were *really* possessed, be rather an impediment, than a furtherance to the propagation of the Catholic Religion.

ages were such miracles of madness or profligacy, as they must have been, if the facts to which they bear testimony were false, and the religion they taught, an imposition on mankind."

That many false and incredible miracles, as well as other fables, have been forged by some, and believed by other Catholics, in every age, including even that of the apostles, cannot be denied; and all modern critics are ready to admit with Vives, that the Golden Legend, with many others of a similar nature, are unworthy of credit, being stuffed with wonderful and ridiculous relations of every description. But are we to deny the truth of all history, because there are numberless false histories? Are we to question the truth of the four Evangelists, because there have been several fabricated Gospels? No, certainly.

As to the common idea of Protestants, and which Dr. Southey wishes to propagate, that nothing can be related so every way absurd, foolish, and almost impossible, but it gains credit with Catholics, and that they make no difference betwixt the most ridiculous stories and what they find in Scripture, it is one of those many gross calumnies and misrepresentations, of which Protestants are guilty. In fact, no Catholic, as such, is obliged to believe any one miracle besides what is found in the Scripture: as to all others, they are only objects of human faith, and he may believe or reject them, as he thinks proper, after considering the honesty of the relator, the authority of the witnesses, or any other

circumstances which are apt to influence him on similar occasions *.

The authority of the Catholic Church therefore, is not at all concerned in the absurd Legends or Lives of Saints, as Dr. Southey contends ; for they have no other authority than that of the persons who attest or relate them ; nor any other foundation than what other histories have.---And as to the examination which the Church makes of miracles for the canonization of saints, instead of encouraging forgeries of this kind, as Dr. Southey asserts, on the contrary, she takes every precaution for ascertaining the truth. See the whole series of

* As Dr. Southey tells us, (p. 8) that he is "sufficiently inclined by nature, to look at things in their ludicrous aspect," and he would doubtless find frequent opportunities of indulging this dangerous propensity in the lives of the Irish, Scotch, and British Saints, since they laboured so much in wonderful, extraordinary, and incredible relations ; but he would have done well to consider, at the same time, how far Almighty God might have accommodated himself to the faith and simplicity of those times, and nations. If the Bollandists have inserted in their great work, lives of this description, it was, say they, "*Non aliter quam ut legendas magna cum indulgentia, erga simplicissimas gentes, et tamdiu solum tolerandas, quamdiu certiora et lectu digniora momenta desunt, ex quibus aliqua Sanctorum illorum hauriatur notitia ; cum ad hoc saltem serviant, ut publicum eorum in populo venerationem antiquam, superinductis hereseon nebulis obscuratam, faciant iterum splendore apud posteros, deque loco ac tempore, quibus vixerunt et obierunt curiosum piumque lectorem edoceant.*" Acta SS. Maii. T. 3. p. 585.

this process described at large by Pope Benedict XIV. in his elaborate work "On the Canonization of Saints," the substance of which the reader may also find in Bishop Hay's excellent work "On Miracles."—See also Bishop Walton, p. 295 *.

9. *The Celibacy of the Clergy.*

It is somewhat surprising that Dr. Southey should attempt to justify the shameful conduct of the first Reformers, in violating their vows of chastity. "Men so conspicuous in their age and station," says he, "as Peter Martyr, and Cranmer, and Parker, might, with great reason, think it fitting to exercise in this point, their Christian liberty†." But is a Christian at liberty then, to violate his religious vows? On this subject, the ancient Fathers thought very differently from Dr. Southey and Martin Luther. St.

* That there is not, however, the same degree of evidence for the Roman Catholic miracles (which have been successively wrought in every age) as we have for the Gospel miracles, I am ready to allow. The evidence for the latter is of the highest kind, and is such as is not to be equalled in any other instance. They are nevertheless, not convincing to the Jews, and modern Deists. The evidence for Catholic miracles has appeared convincing to thousands of honest, sincere, and learned Christians, in every age; and no doubt they would appear equally convincing to Protestants, did they but lay aside the prejudices which they have imbibed against the Catholic Church.

† p. 296.

Austin and St. Chrysostome, affirm, that the breach of a religious vow, is worse than adultery. And what says St. Paul? that widows who marry, after they have made a vow of continency, *have damnation, because they have cast off the first faith.* 1 Tim. c. 5. v. 12.

Although marriage, therefore, when lawfully contracted, be honourable in all, yet, if either the Clergy or others, vow celibacy, to which the Gospel gives a general exhortation *, that is, *to make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven's sake*; in that case, marriage ceases to be lawful to them, however lawful it may be to the rest of mankind. Deut. c. 23. v. 22, 23. *If thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.* But, *that which is gone out of thy lips, thou shalt keep and perform.* Hence the Council of Illiberis, Can. 13. the fourth Council of Carthage, Can. 104. and the great Council of Chalcedon, Can. 15. excommunicate those who presume to marry after such a vow. What would the Church of those ages have thought of the Protestant Religion, introduced into the world by men that had notoriously broken through these most solemn engagements, and who raised the fabrick of their pretended reformation, upon thousands of broken vows?

But Dr. Southey asserts, that “a wide spreading of immorality was the *inevitable* result of the law which enjoins the celibacy of the Clergy †.”

* Matt. c. 19. v. 12. 1 Cor. c. 7. v. 7.

† p. 502.

The assurance with which the Dr. asserts this, carries an air to impose upon readers, by an art familiar to those who want proofs. But if this assurance be grounded, as I presume it is, on falsifications of the Holy Scriptures, in that case, the Protestant Bible wants a reformation much more than the Catholic Church ever did. Christ did not say, "All men *cannot* receive this saying," but all men *do not* receive this saying, as the original Greek word expresses it. Mat. c. 19. v. 11. Again, 1 Cor. c. 7. v. 9. St. Paul does not say, "If they *cannot* contain," as the Protestant translation has corrupted the text, but, "If they *do not* contain, let them marry." There is another notorious corruption of this kind, Gal. c. 5. v. 17. "The spirit and the flesh are contrary one to the other, so that you do not the things that you would." For which the Protestant Bible puts, "So that you *cannot* do the things that you would." Now, there is certainly a large difference between *not doing* a thing, and *not being able* to do it.

What will Dr. Southey say to these corrupt translations of the Bible? Is it not really a melancholy thought, that so many thousands of well meaning souls should be wretchedly deluded with the pretence of God's pure word, when, instead of this, they have put in their hands false translations, which present them with a mortal poison, instead of the food of life?

The advantages to the common weal of having an unmarried Clergy, are clearly pointed out by St. Paul, 1 Cor. c. 7. v. 32, 33. "He that is un-

married, careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord : but he that is married, careth for the things of this world, how he may please his wife." Hence we infer, that a single state is much more agreeable to the Christian Priesthood than marriage ; nor do we find any example in the Primitive Church, of any one that ever married, after he had received the order of Priesthood. On the contrary, the Oriental Council of Neocesaria, under Vitalis, Bishop of Antioch, (and therefore, between the year 313 and 319) decreed, that a Priest, if he married, should be deposed.— Nothing, certainly, can excuse either the broken vows and apostacy of the first reformers, or the Reformation itself, (that is, the setting up of a new raised Communion, in opposition to the Catholic and standing Church of all ages) whether Christianity requires the single life of Church-men or not.

10. *Where was the Religion of Protestants before Luther ? p. 314.*

THE question is best answered, says Dr. Southey, as Sir Henry Wotton answered it: " It was to be found then, where the Romish Religion is not to be found now, in the written word of God." This reply, however, which the Dr. considers as irrefragable as that word itself, will be found, upon examination, far from being satisfactory. As to the doctrine of Protestants being found in Scripture, it is the old pretence of almost all heretics ; who as long as

they will allow of no interpretation of the Scripture but their own, are sure to appeal to Scripture, which, in plain English, is indeed only appealing to themselves and their own conceits, which they father upon the Scripture. But Catholic writers have, again and again, proved that no part of the Protestant's *reformed* doctrine can be found in Scripture, without the help of his own comment, to which the whole Church of Christ was always a stranger.---Besides, this answer of Protestants, is not only false, but also foreign to the question: for the question, as proposed by Catholics, is not, whether there was any book before Luther that contained the doctrine of Protestants, but where *their Church was*. That is, whether there was, at that time, any *society of men*, any where upon earth, that made profession of that same doctrine which Protestants at present maintain. Let them name a single man, if they can, who agreed throughout with Protestants in all articles of religion, before Luther's time. This Patriarch of the Reformation acknowledges, that he *stood alone*.

11. *Of the Succession of Protestants from the Apostles.*

IT is difficult to conceive what claim Protestants can have to *Apostolical Succession*; but Dr. Southey asserts it "to be matter of history, as far as history extends." p. 315. In general, few Protestants trouble themselves about *succession*; for they flatter themselves that Scrip-

ture is on their side, and so look no farther. Let them, however, impartially examine and consider well the following text of Scripture, which is decidedly against them, and their claim to succession. In the last words of St. Matthew's Gospel, Christ positively said to his apostles, that is, to the first Pastors of his Church, when he sent them to preach and teach in all nations, *Behold I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* The apostles, in their own persons, were not to live to the end of the world : it is therefore to *them* and their successors, the Pastors of the Church, in a *continual line, (always)* that this promise and prophecy of Christ are to be verified. Now, can Dr. Southey, or any man of sense, be satisfied, that the *truth* of his religion depends upon the falsehood of the Gospel? or, that he cannot be in the right, unless Jesus Christ has deceived us? If Christ had said, behold I am with the Church of Rome, at all times, even to the end of the world, would not this text have been sufficient evidence against all the pretended difficulties and demonstrations which Protestants alledge from Scripture?

Now, it appears evident to common sense, that Christ said *that*, which excludes the *Reformation* as much, as if he had promised to be for ever with the Church of Rome. For all the world knows, that the *Reformation* (which began only in 1517) was not only a *change of doctrine*, but also a setting up of a new raised Communion. It is, therefore, known to all the world, that Protestants have not, in *their Communion*, a continual succes-

sion of pastors from the apostles. But the promise and prophecy of Christ, are to be *always with the Pastors of his Church*, the apostles' successors, *to the end of the world*. If then Protestants be not in communion with any standing Church of all ages, they are as evidently excluded by the promise and prophecy of Christ, as if he had named that *Church of all ages*, with which he was to be always present. Even Dr. Southey himself must allow, that he cannot shew a continual succession of Pastors in *his* Communion; and consequently it was with a *different Communion* from his, that Christ promised to be *always present*. For his prophecy and promise evidently regard the *Church of all ages*. So that it is the same thing as if Christ had said, *And behold I am with the Church of all ages to the end of the world*; and consequently, it must needs be different from all the Reformed Churches, of Protestants, Presbyterians, Quakers, and the rest; but, whether it be that of the Greeks or Romanists, is not now the question. Yet it is important to observe, that in all controverted points between Catholics and Protestants, the Eastern Churches agree with that of Rome, except in that of the Pope's Supremacy*.

* That the Oriental Churches formerly acknowledged the Pope's Supremacy, is certain. In the first General Council at Nice, the Pope's Legates took place of all the Oriental Patriarchs, anno 325. (In Subscript. Episcop. T. 2. Conc. p. 50. E. Et apud Socratem, Li. 1. cap. 13. Ed. Valesii).

Anno 382.—The Oriental Bishops at Constantinople, in a

CONCLUSION.

IN concluding these remarks on Dr. Southey's *Vindiciæ*, I appeal to the impartial reader, whether the Dr. has not completely failed in his attempt to substantiate the heinous charge of "imposture, of idolatry, and wickedness," against the Roman Catholic Church? His book, in my opinion, may be considered as a libel on human nature, rather than a vindication of the Protestant Reformation; because it libels an infinite number of men, distinguished by their integrity,

letter to Pope Damasus, call themselves *his members* *. And in his answer, he styles them *his most honourable children* †.

Anno 431.—Pope Celestin is styled in the General Council of Ephesus, *nomine contradicente*, the *Head of the Council* ‡, and St. Peter's successor. The Council itself, calls him *their most holy Father* §.

Anno 451.—The General Council of Chalcedon calls St. Leo *their Head*, and says, *the Vineyard was committed by our Blessed Saviour, to his Apostolical Holiness* ||. His Legate subscribed the definition of Faith, in these terms, "Synodo præsidens—subscripsi, Presiding over the Council, I have subscribed it ¶.

* Apud Theodoretum, Li. 5. Hist. cap. 9.

† Apud eundem, cap. 10.

‡ Act. 2. p. 619.

§ Act. 3. p. 626. A. B.

|| In Depositione Nestorii. Act. 1. p. 533.

¶ In Epist. ad eundem, T. 4. Conc. p. 833. D.

learning, and veracity. Dr. Southey appears to have written it for party purposes, and merely with temporal views : his aim was to vilify the standing Church of all ages, and to extenuate the atrocities of the first Reformers, who rebelled against her lawful authority. It is this party-spirit, rather than *liberality*, which binds the understanding, and “acts like a palsy upon the heart, taking from it all sense of indignation at what is base and atrocious, all feelings of admiration at what is virtuous and exalted, so as to pervert its perceptions, and make evil appear good, and good, evil.” p. 46.

The Cardinal point, upon which all others turn, appears to be the indefectibility of Christ’s Church, against which the gates of hell can never prevail : and since it has pleased Almighty God to grant us a Code of Faith, as a test of our obedience, and as a means of our salvation, he may well be supposed to have a simple and easy method of discovering its meaning, without perplexity, and of preserving it without error. This method is no other than a ready and willing submission to those Pastors whom the Holy Ghost has appointed to rule the Church of God. Acts c. 20. v. 28.---The Bishops of the Christian world, assembled in general council, under the sacred guidance of the Holy Spirit, constitute the highest tribunal in the Church of Christ ; nor can we assign a better guide than such a tribunal, for distinguishing the true doctrine of Christ, from the various heresies which have, in every age, been springing up in the world ; although never in such numbers as since the Refor-

mation*, when the grand blow was aimed at the destruction of all ecclesiastical authority. Dr. Southey would do well to reflect on the nature of schism, which Dr. Daubeny considers as the great and increasing evil of the present day, and which is a disobedience and a criminal revolt against the Church, that is, against Jesus Christ himself, since he has said to the ministers of his Church, "He who hears you, hears me; and he who despises you, despises me," Luke c. 10. v. 16.; and such a rebellion is compared in Scripture, to the crime of *idolatry*: "It is like the sin of witchcraft to rebel, and like the crime of idolatry to refuse to obey." 1 Kings c. 15. v. 23.

That there is a schism between Protestants and Catholics cannot be denied, since the former have erected altar against altar, and wholly separated themselves from the Communion of the latter; founding their separation on a variety of doctrinal points, which completely divide the two Churches. The chief and most important question therefore, which Dr. Southey ought to have examined, but of which he says nothing to the purpose, is this: Who are guilty of this schism? Now, according

* The great Frederick, King of Prussia, in his Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg, shews the springs of this boasted Reformation, to have been the very basest passions of the human mind. "He closes his account," says Alban Butler, "with this corollary. If we would reduce the causes of the progress of the Reformation into simple principles—It was in Germany, the work of covetousness,—in England, that of lust, and in France, that of novelty, or perhaps of a song."

to the rules laid down by the Holy Fathers, the guilt of schism attaches to those who have separated themselves from the root, that is, from the Church in which they were regenerated, --- from the Church which preceded them, --- from the Church which is in the nature of a trunk, and to which they were joined like branches, --- from the Church which is diffused over all nations, --- in short, from the Church which comes from the Apostles, by an uninterrupted succession of Bishops and Priests. See St. Cyprian, "On the Unity of the Church*." See, also, St. Optatus, "against the Donatists," where he observes, "that the Church is but *one*: for Christ is only one, and he is the Spouse of one Church, which is called his only *dove*, the *garden shut up*, and the *sealed fountain*." He adds, "that heretics and schismatics are branches lopped off from the vine, and reserved for the fire, because they imitate Corah, Dathan, and Abiron." Li. 1. n. 10. "We have, therefore," says he, "only to examine, who have remained attached to the root; who have broken off from it; who have seated themselves in a different chair from that in which they were first placed; who have erected altar against altar," &c. Li. 2. n. 9. &c.

Now all this evidently applies to Protestants, and proves that they are guilty of schism. The Catholic Church was before them; from her they received their spiritual birth; in their regard, she is the root and trunk; and from this root and trunk they separated themselves, and are become like so many use-

* Ecclesiæ Catholicæ radicem et matricem.

less branches, cut off from the vine: but the Church, as St. Austin observes, still remained in her root, in her vine, in her charity*. Luther was baptized and educated in the Catholic Church, and when he deserted it, professed openly, that he stood *alone*;—Calvin had no predecessor in the chair of Geneva;—and on the tomb of *Æcolampadius* was put this inscription: “*Æcolampadius, the first Bishop of Basil.*” I, therefore, earnestly invite Dr. Daubeny and Dr. Southey, and all conscientious Protestants, as they tender their salvation, carefully to examine this subject with an unbiassed mind, and I doubt not that the result of such an inquiry would be a clear conviction, that the first reformers were guilty of the crime of schism, and consequently, that they themselves are bound to abandon that schism, and to return to the bosom of their true Mother, the *Catholic Church*.

Protestants, indeed, may say, that in abandoning the Roman Catholic Church, they did not abandon Jesus Christ. But St. Austin answers, that it will avail them nothing to confess Jesus Christ, if they slander and defame his Church, and refuse to submit to her authority. “If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.” Matt. c. 18. v. 17.

Again, Protestants say in their vindication, that they were obliged to leave the Church of Rome, on account of her errors and corruptions. But this is

* *Hæreses omnes de illa exierunt, tanquam sarmenta inutilia de vite præcisa: ipsa autem manet in radice sua, in vite sua, in charitate sua.*—Aug. Li. de Symb. c. 6.

a vain pretext ; for, as St. Austin observes, " There never can be a just necessity for dividing the Unity of the Church, because schism is the greatest of evils." And St. Dionysius of Alexandria affirms, that " we ought rather to endure any torments, than consent to a division of God's Church ; and the martyrdom to which we might expose ourselves by preventing such a division, would be no less glorious, than to suffer death for refusing to sacrifice to idols." Euseb. Hist. Lib. 1. 6. c. 45.

I am aware that Protestants have not the same idea, either of heresy or schism, which the Catholic Church has always had of them. According to Chillingworth and Stillingfleet, " Heresy is an obstinate defence of error, against a *necessary* article of the Christian Faith." And schism is a *causeless* separation of one part of the Church from another. But is not an obstinate defence of error against any article of the Christian Faith a *damnable sin* ? And what sin is it, if it be not heresy ?— In the case both of heresy and schism, who is the *lawful* judge, if the Catholic Church be not ?— Who is the lawful judge which articles are *necessary* ; which separation is *causeless*, which is not ?— See Dr. Hawarden's Works.

But Protestants think it not reasonable, that the Church should be judge in her own cause. Protestants, however, think it reasonable enough, that *themselves* should be so. And, if neither party must be judge (since all Christians, upon one account or other, are engaged in the dispute, and therefore parties) all the disputes of Christians

among themselves must necessarily be decided by unchristian Judges, such as Jews, Turks, Deists, Heathens, or conscientious Atheists. But this is a method which the Catholic Church, from the beginning, hath never adopted.—If judging of the disputes of her children, be judging in her own cause, it is too late to question her authority now, after she has been eighteen hundred years in the exercise of it.—In vain do Protestants appeal to Scripture, and cry out with Chillingworth: “The Bible, the Bible only is the Religion of Protestants.”—Such was also the cry of the Arians; but it did not prevent the Church from deciding against them. In fact, whoever appeals to a dead jury, makes himself the judge. “To appeal to the Scriptures alone, when the sense of them only is questionable, is to declare, that we will not submit to any other trial but our own sense,” says Mr. Thorndike. Which, I think, may very well be called a definition of heresy; that is, of choosing by caprice what we will or will not believe. I believe, and am willing to be judged by the Holy Catholic Church, is the humble faith of a Christian.—*I will not submit my judgment to any one in matters of religion*, is, I fear, a sure mark of heresy, self-conceit, and pride. See Tit. c. 3 v. 10, 11. No doubt there will be lying masters, who cunningly will introduce *damnable* heresies, and bring upon themselves swift perdition, and many will follow their pernicious ways, 2 Pet. c. 2. v. 1, 2. —Wherefore since nothing, as the holy Fathers observe, can justify schism, which is a spiritual rebellion against the Church of Christ; so nothing

can excuse the offence of shaking off the just and lawful authority of God's ministers, whom we are commanded to obey. Heb. c. 13. v. 17. Matt. c. 18. v. 17. Luke c. 10. v. 16.

I remember somewhere to have read an account of a conference between Beza and Cardinal du Perron, which, as it treats of the motives of their respective separation from the communion in which they had been born and brought up, may not perhaps be considered as quite inapplicable to the present subject. In fact, the Cardinal's answer to Beza may be considered as a sufficient answer to the many legendary tales and ridiculous stories, which the Poet Laureate has collected, with the view of exhibiting a hideous caricature of the Catholic Religion, and thus justifying the Protestant Reformation.

It is well known that Beza was originally a Catholic, and Cardinal du Perron a Calvinist. You see, Mr. Beza, said the Cardinal, a great disparity in our present religious profession : pray inform me, what were your reasons for quitting the Catholic Church ? Beza alledged, as Dr. Southey does, the many abuses, corruptions, and errors existing in the Church ; some of which he had been an eye-witness of himself, and others he had learned from the testimony and writings of persons of veracity. The Cardinal replied, that these allegations might be in a great degree true ; that he was ashamed of them, and exceedingly sorry they should have crept into the Church ; but that they did not justify a separation from that Church. Now, Sir, added the Cardinal, to take a nearer view of your rea-

sons for relinquishing the Communion of the Catholic Church, they seem to aim more directly at the corrupt and superstitious practices of some monks and friars, than at any point of faith, universally acknowledged such by the Church. You have recounted to me the extravagant pitch to which they have brought the devotion of the Blessed Virgin, together with the Patron Saints of their Orders, and as other consequences of the doctrine of the Invocation of Saints, and the Veneration of their Relics and Images. You have enumerated many pious frauds and juggles ; the strange legends that have been invented, the heavenly visions that were pretended, the miracles that were forged, and a multiplicity of many other absurdities, to delude the minds of the unwary and ignorant, and keep them in a state of ignorance and dependence. But, admitting the reality of these abuses, all proceeding from the depravity of man's heart, or the imbecility of his understanding, they do not invalidate the *essence of faith*. As to the monks and friars, it cannot be denied, but that many of them have been very learned men, and eminent for true sanctity and integrity of life ; others of them, whose intellects had been weak, took a wrong bias, from a sort of mystic devotion, that had insensibly gained ground among them ; others have done unseemly things, *turpis lucri gratia*. But do not think that any thing of this kind will justify you as a schismatic. No, if there were abuses in the Church, you should have remained in the Church to rectify them, as far as lay in your power. If you were conveniently lodged in a magnificent palace, richly and beauti-

fully adorned, would you desert it, if, by some means, a few beasts had entered into the hall, and defiled it with their ordure? No, a man of sense, sooner than desert so noble an habitation, would immediately set about clearing out the filth, and would prevent, if possible, such unclean animals from entering there again. The Church of Christ, a Church firmly founded upon a rock, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, is that magnificent and spacious palace, which is open to receive you again, like the prodigal child, with love and tenderness. For my part, I have always thought with St. Paul, that Christ cannot be divided, (1 Cor. c.1. v. 17) and that all Christians should be perfectly joined together in the *same mind* and the *same judgment*, ver. 10, &c.

It is the judicious remark of Mr. Gibbon, that “the enemies of a Religion never understand it, because they hate it; and they often hate it, because they do not understand it; therefore, they adopt the most atrocious calumnies against it.” * How often, and how far this remark has been verified with regard to the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland, is but too well known to the informed and impartial.—Certain it is, as O’Leary observes, that in matters of Religion man must be guided, either by his private judgment, or by authority: the errors of the learned, and the wild extravagances of the ignorant, who from time to time became their own oracles, evidently demonstrate that the first is a deceitful guide. If the mind of man then, naturally fickle and unsettled,

* Essay on Literature.

stands in need of a guide in the road to eternal life, a prudent man will never hesitate to take for his guide the Catholic Church, which contains in herself the authority of past and future ages : nor will he run here and there in quest of his father's legacy, whilst he has it in his possession.

The Catholic Church has her commission registered in the archives of Christianity : it is her's to interpret the law ; it is the individual's duty to obey : thus his faith resembles the pillar which guided the wayfaring Israelites. If it has the darkness of a cloud, it has the brightness of fire ; if it proposes mysteries wrapped up in *anful obscurity*, the motives of credibility and the authority on which he believes them, afford *full light* and sufficient evidence to command his assent.

It must then be acknowledged, that the submission of a Catholic to the Church, is at least as reasonable as that of any other Christian to the rules and institutions of the Society to which he belongs ; and history informs us that these Societies were never satisfied their members should believe Scripture alone, but insisted moreover that they should interpret them in the sense received by the pastors and teachers of each society to which they belonged.*

In vain do Quakers, Presbyterians, Anabaptists, and Methodists, open their Bibles to prove the purity and sublimity of their respective doctrines ; the Established Church will insist on their finding out the Thirty-nine Articles in scripture, otherwise she excludes them from her privileges

* I here transcribe from O'Leary's Tracts.

and benefices. On the other hand, the Thirty-nine Articles would meet with an inhospitable reception, as *Scriptural Invaders*, in the Kirk of Scotland. Let Ecclesiastical Authority be ever so much exploded, as an insupportable tyranny, it is plain that every Christian Society exercises it; and let the right of private judgment be painted as the offspring of heaven; on earth, individuals must assimilate its features to the judgment of the Societies to which they belong.

As the Catholic Church is aware of the horrid consequences attending an uncontrouled interpretation of the Scriptures, as well amongst the learned as the ignorant of her communion, therefore, although she permits the reading of them, she prohibits any interpretation of them which may alter the *divine faith*, which she herself *has not the power to change*.—Such as it has been handed down to her, *pure and unaltered* from its first source, such she will transmit to succeeding generations, to the end of time. In restraining them under such limitations, she effectually guards them against the monstrous and contradictory doctrines, which are daily springing up, which have sprung up from the very infancy of Christianity, and at different times will spring up till time shall be no more. Thus the Catholic Church, like a *fond and tender Mother*, cautions her children against unwholesome, poisonous, and deadly food.

No person then has a right to controul or blame her, for keeping her own children within the bounds of subordination and due obedience. It is an authority which the Consistory of Geneva as-

sumes to itself, and exercises over its subjects. It burnt Rousseau's *Emilius*, though Rousseau and Shaftesbury acknowledged that the Catholic Church could do it with a better grace. "Prove to me," says the former, "that there is any authority upon earth to which I am bound to submit, and to-morrow I'll become a Catholic." And Shaftesbury, though he ascribes her power to the refinement of policy, as all freethinkers ascribe the establishment of Christianity to the same cause, acknowledges, that he would find the exercise of Ecclesiastical Authority more tolerable under such an Hierarchy, than under the sway of those who are eternally contending with her. "This," says he, "is that ancient hierarchy, which, in respect of its foundation, its policy, and the consistency of its whole frame and constitution, cannot but appear, in some respect, *august and venerable*, even in such as we do not esteem weak eyes. These are the spiritual conquerors, who, like the first Cæsars, from small beginnings, established the foundation of an almost universal monarchy. No wonder if, at this day, the immediate view of the hierarchical residence, the Court and City of Rome, be found to have an extraordinary effect on foreigners of other later churches. No wonder, if the amazed surveyors are for the future so apt, either to conceive the horriddest aversion to priestly government, or on the contrary, to admire it so far, as to wish a coalescence with this ancient Mother Church"---*Shaftesbury's Charact.* vol. iii. p. 31.

FINIS.

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